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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2003

**U.S. ATTORNEY PATRICK L. MEEHAN AND LANCASTER COUNTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY DONALD TOTARO TO TESTIFY BEFORE SENATE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE ON SUCCESS OF
*PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – United States Attorney Patrick Meehan and Lancaster County District Attorney Donald Totaro are scheduled to tell a panel of U.S. senators Tuesday, May 13, how the federal gun crime initiative, *Project Safe Neighborhoods*, is reducing violence in Lancaster and other communities throughout the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Testimony is set to begin at 9:30 a.m. and will be carried live on C-SPAN2.

Project Safe Neighborhoods is an initiative by the United States Attorney's Office and other federal, state, and local agencies designed to identify and prosecute firearms offenders in federal court, where the defendants are likely to receive a substantial sentence upon conviction.

Among the cases from Lancaster County that have been approved for federal prosecution since the program's inception was that of Charles Banks, a repeat offender who was sentenced to 15 years and 8 months in prison after pleading guilty to firearms and drug charges.

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